

GORDON BELL

Physician & Naturalist

by

E. W. Montgomery



The Gordon Bell Memorial Lecture
April, 1931



GORDON BELL

Physician and Naturalist

I WOULD like to express to the Winnipeg Medical Society my sincerest thanks for the privilege they are giving me tonight. I am indeed sensible of the honor you are showing me in allowing my name to be associated with that distinguished group of men which for several years has presented to your Society, and to the citizens of Winnipeg, an annual tribute to the memory of Gordon Bell. While impressed beyond my powers of expression by the consideration you have thus shown me, I have a still far keener sense of the responsibility which this task imposes. The occasion of this gathering is to keep alive the memory of Gordon Bell, a friend of all the world, a citizen of this province, a physician who excelled in the science of curing disease, and in the art of doing good: a man of such rare attainments of mind and heart that his name and fame might well be held before us as a perpetual symbol of human excellence. It is now something over seven years since he passed into the realm of shades. We, who knew him as he was, a buoyant spirit caged in a scholar's fragile form, are becoming, year by year, a rapidly dwindling minority. In our footsteps there are following young men and youths—a great host—who never knew Gordon Bell as we have known him. What legacy of inspiration or of more enduring worth can those who follow us inherit than an intimate knowledge of his life and character?

Man has often been described as the capstone of creation. Surely not on account of his physical structure, which teems with imperfections, nor on account of his moral nature, which is so rarely splendid, or worthy of emulation, but, on account of his intellectual gifts, which have lifted him out of the category of animal and has made for him a separate niche in the hall of animate creation.

Pasteur, in his address to the students and faculty of Edinburgh University, gave to his hearers as the very essence of good advice the memorable words "worship great men," so may I be permitted in my humble way to direct your thoughts, and thus in some slight degree to fashion your lives after the plan and inspiration which the career of Gordon Bell so ably sets forth.

The quality of his greatness did not find expression in medical discoveries of outstanding value, neither in widely recognized contributions to a literature or science, but in a quiet and

eminently effective way he did his job in this community, he overcame handicaps and bore down opposition that would have dismayed and defeated far stronger men. These things he did, not because he had either wealth or physical vigor, but because he possessed to a superlative degree an eager mind and an unconquerable spirit.

Each of us who knew Gordon Bell as a medical student, and in his mature years, without doubt would have sketched his earlier life in the outlines and with the colors he displayed in later years. We thought of him as a boy interested in everything and everybody, fond of books and outdoor life, especially keen on fishing and shooting: an attentive scholar with a prodigious memory, and above all with an abiding willingness to help his less gifted school-mates. It is indeed a source of much satisfaction to have this fanciful picture of his early life confirmed by a most welcome letter which I have received from Mr. Lennox Irving of Victoria, B.C. Mr. Irving and Gordon were born in Pembroke in the year 1863. They grew up together, attended the same school, sat at the same desk, read the same poetry, and pirate stories, together, were as intimate and as faithful to each other as were Mark Twain's immortal pair of boyhood chums, and I esteem it as a rare privilege to be able to present to you Mr. Irving's account of Gordon Bell's early life.

"Dear Doctor Montgomery:

"If I could write with freedom and not for publication I might fill volumes and then not exhaust all the eulogistic sentiments I could express about Dr. Gordon Bell, one of the best men I have ever met. The greatest of all poets in describing a 'Great Man' and his life, said:

" 'His life was gentle and the elements so mixed in
him that nature might stand up and say to all the world,
'He was a man.'

"Doctor Bell and I were school boys together. It happens that I was born on the 16th of May and Doctor Bell was born on the 22nd of May, 1863, in the town of Pembroke, Ontario, and were friends all our lives. Mr. John Bell, his father, was one of the 'Great Lumber Kings' of the early Ottawa Valley days, a clever, well read, thoroughly informed citizen, on the current thought of his day. Mrs. Bell was an active, efficient and clever woman, keeping herself ever abreast of the times, and taking a part in the life and activities of the community. As you know, in those Scotch settlements of the early days education was the ideal ever before the boys and girls, and in every house there was sure to be found a library, with the standard authors on the shelves. Brought up in such literary surroundings, of necessity we absorbed some of their wholesomeness. The first school Gordon and I went to was a private school conducted by Mrs. A. MacDougall, an

Irish lady, who captured the prize offered by the Montreal Daily Witness for the best poem on Ireland. She subsequently published a volume of her poetry 'Verses and Rhymes by the Way.' It was a wonderful school and Doctor Bell imbibed his taste for poetry and literature from the literary and poetic atmosphere ever present in our first school room. When the school was disbanded, as each student owned his and her desk, these sacred desks were taken to our homes and I can see Gordon and myself sitting at his desk in the upper hall of the Bell home looking over the 'Leisure Hour,' the 'Dominion Monthly,' and, sub-rosa, 'Jack Harkaway.'

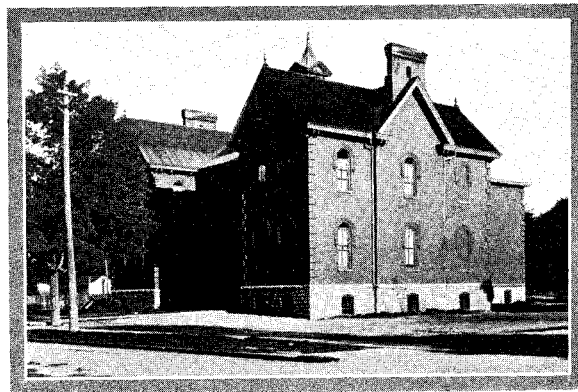
"We may very profitably linger a moment to contemplate the idyllic picture sketched here in faint outline but so full of meaning to a sympathetic eye—the quiet, roomy upper hall of Gordon's birthplace, rain on the roof or beating on the window-panes, you can see the inseparables at the well worn desk, you can hear Gordon's boyish giggle as he tells of some mild practical joke he has just pulled off, or you can hear them planning a trip into the woods and up Rat River on the morrow. Life to them, and to all boys such as they were, was, and is, so interesting, so full of adventure, so wonderful, that one often wonders why in reason any boy should ever wish to be a man!

"Gordon Bell was always a student, and I can hear him yet as he repeated selections from Shakespeare when we went out hunting or fishing, both of which sports consumed much of our time. In our boyhood days the Wild Pigeon *darkened the sun* in their thousands of flocks, and we have sat on the hill slopes and shot pigeons as they perched on the rampikes in the pea fields along the river. We had the old muzzle loaders then, and when Mr. Bell purchased a "laminated steel" breechloading shot gun for Gordon, he was the hero of the hour.

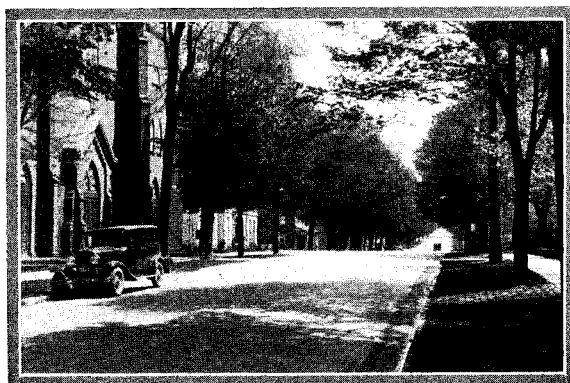
"We were sorry to leave our pleasant surroundings in the private school and journey to the big public school in the extreme western part of the town. But, it had to be done. Gordon was always looked upon as one of the brightest students. At the usual age we entered High School, the Principal of which was R. G. Scott, B.A. The trials and tribulations of a school boy in those days we endured with the usual fortitude. The testing examination at that time I think was more difficult than the matriculation of today, and we were all delighted when the glorious news arrived from the Examining Board that Gordon Bell was one of the successful candidates, so that from his very earliest 'scholastic' life Gordon Bell showed his ability to acquire information and knowledge of those subjects which are rather irksome to a less scientific mind. His was a mind that seemed to grasp the principles of any subject. He was equally proficient in Classics (the Virgil selections on the curriculum he could almost repeat word for word, as



*Birthplace,
Pembroke*



*High School,
Pembroke*



*Principal
Residential
Street,
Pembroke*

he was fond of poetry), while in mathematics and the sciences he was unequalled.

"In his school days he was most highly thought of by his companions. He was so generous, good natured and ever willing to give his best to his fellow students. As he always had his lessons well prepared he could and did help many of his less fortunate fellows, never begrudging the time, trouble, or inconvenience it cost him. Naturally he was of a shy and reserved disposition, and often did not assert himself when he should have done so, frequently standing in his own light. He was possessed of a keen sense of humor and his hearty generous laugh was captivating and contagious. After our High School days Gordon went to Toronto, graduating in 1887, while I graduated from Queens University. I think Doctor Bell, had he taken it up seriously, would have made one of Canada's best after-dinner speakers. The first time I ever heard him speak, outside of the orations we delivered in our *stable lofts*, was at a Club meeting in rooms in the Murray Block, Pembroke. I was Secretary of the Club, and as a surprise for the members I had Gordon Bell address the gathering. It was a very interesting political address. As you well know, Doctor Bell could not say a bitter thing, but he put such a humorous turn to what might easily have been made an unkind statement that even our political opponents were forced to smile. We enjoyed his address very much, and carried unanimously a hearty vote of thanks to the evening's orator. The reply of Doctor Bell was most amusing, and the whole audience cheered him to the echo. That would be about 1887, the year he graduated in Arts.

"In his school days he was popular, generous, kind and true, one of the cleverest in his class, and I think brilliant. In his later scholastic life, he clearly showed a brilliance the envy of many; and in his professional life, the records of his work in his community speak louder than words. His whole nature displayed such an excellent quality of heart and mind that to know him was a great privilege, and to have him as one's friend was one of the greatest gifts Providence has bestowed upon either of us.

"In conclusion, all I can say about the late Gordon Bell is that there never was a better man, a truer, kinder, more generous, or sympathetic soul, giving of his best, his time and his talents to his fellowmen.

"To write this letter to you has been a pleasure, as it has again brought in panoramic review before my mind many of the happiest and best remembered scenes of my childhood and boyhood with the best friend I ever had, Doctor Gordon Bell.

Yours truly,

"LENNOX IRVING."

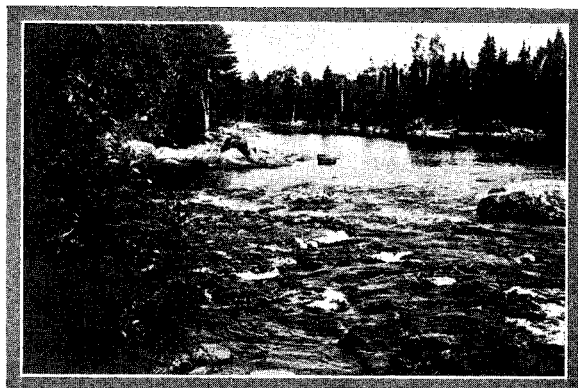


*Scenery Along
the Upper
Ottawa*





*Scenes Along
the Upper
Ottawa*



A man like a tree grows by virtue of the seed from which he springs, and like a tree he finds his nurture in the soil and climate of his birthplace. It is a plain fact that the mind and character of a boy is moulded into strength and symmetry, or warped and distorted by the environment of childhood and youth. Our hero was born and bred at Pembroke, Ontario. Pembroke is on the south shore of the Ottawa River. In front of the town lies that broad expanse of the Ottawa called Lake Alouette, and away across this lake to the north lie the forests and green fields of the French farms right up against the Laurentian Mountains. The Laurentians here form a very respectable chain of high blue hills, saw-toothed and jagged enough to suggest real mountains with ice-fields and precipices; there they stand in the north; a barrier against the Arctic blast and a challenge to anyone who dares to penetrate beyond their rugged crests. Doubtless the distant wavy blue line of the Laurentian ridge, while it bounded the northern horizon did not hinder, but rather stimulated the growing boy's imagination. Across the lake, past the fenced fields, even behind and beyond that dim range of everlasting hills was an unknown country, wrapped in the haze and charm of the unexplored! What rivers and lakes, what unblazed forests, what tumbling waterfalls beyond!

Past the town glides the Ottawa's trembling flood. In an arid country the course of every river is defined by a fringe of trees, and a ribbon of luxuriant growth. In a heavily forested land, such as northern Canada, the tallest trees and the rankest grass are always found where a living stream lends moisture to the thirsting roots, so the mind of a boy—or a man—is fed by what a river carries past his door. The Ottawa carried past Pembroke the rain-drops from a million hills, and the undulating chorus of numberless falls and rapids in the upper reaches of the river; above all, when the wind was with the current, down river there came the low but awe-inspiring song of the pine forest, a music in which there was no hint of mirth, but rather the suggestion of a stormy sea, of some weird whispered story coming from the very heart of the ancient forest. The river, too, carries one's thoughts downward in its tumbling course, through rocky gorges or with gentle motion by meandering loops past meadows and peaceful fields till the sea comes up to meet it in some wide bay. How could any boy live by such a stream and not allow his thoughts and longings to be carried by its current past silent hills, lonesome farms, villages and populous cities till they lose themselves in the earth's encircling sea? And thus within the heart of such a boy is kindled that divine unrest, that old stinging trouble of humanity, which makes for high achievement.

Gordon Bell was well-born, he sprung from good Scotch-English stock—in consequence he got away to a good start. Nature

was lavish with her gifts. His father was a successful timber merchant, his mother came of Devonshire stock, and passed on to her illustrious son an extra-ordinary mental capacity, but better still, an ever expanding sense of obligation to his fellow-men which proved to be the driving force in his career. In addition to a good ancestry, Gordon Bell had the good luck to have been born and brought up in the country. To have been raised in a village or on a farm is a peculiar privilege that most great men have enjoyed. Naturally there have been a few notable exceptions to this rule—John Milton, for example—who was a Cockney—but remember that Milton lost his sight at 30. Perhaps had he been bereft of his hearing as well he might have been an even greater genius. Sense impressions in a city are too numerous and too stimulating to foster the natural habit of careful and persistent thinking which quality or habit is the very heritage of genius. Solitude, or at least time and place for quiet thought, is as necessary to the growth of genius as is a fertile soil to the optimum growth of good seed.

Gordon was also fortunate in that his youthful career was handicapped by neither riches nor extreme poverty. In the acquisition of wealth many men have not only ruined their own lives but have transmitted the taste for idleness and luxury to their descendants—the taint of inherited wealth and a taste for ease manifests itself in all sorts of odd ways; not long ago a man applied to me for a job on the farm, but I noted at once that the seat of his pants was shiny, which put him on the blacklist as a farm-hand. Give me the boy on a farm with fringes on the legs of his pants and the toes of his shoes worn thin! Many noted men still living, and many more who are dead—but not forgotten—have, through poverty in youth and childhood, been starved both in body and mind—one such was Abraham Lincoln; we are familiar with the tale of his school days, how he did his lessons at night by the flickering light of a log fire on the hearth, while he lay on the bare earthen floor of his cabin, but we must not forget that Lincoln was a pioneer surrounded by the untold riches of the most fertile part of this continent, that he was the potential owner of as much of the forest and plain and rivers and lakes as he could use, and that his poverty was not poverty at all, but instead, unexploited riches, and so perchance when abject poverty is quoted as being a suitable soil for the growth of genius there may be found a fallacy in each individual case. Bobbie Burns, too, is often quoted as one whose genius was nurtured and stimulated by short rations but hear what he says of thrift:

“To court Dame Fortune’s golden smile
Assiduous wait upon her
And gather gear by every wile
That’s justified by honour

Not for to hide it in a hedge
Not for a trained attendant
But for the glorious privilege
Of being independent."

To be born in extreme poverty then would seem to be about as bad a start as anyone could get in life's handicap.

Gordon Bell's life and character was the finished product of a good heredity upon which a favorable environment had moulded a personality of heroic stature; to all who knew him intimately it was apparent that his university career and his subsequent—or one might say his consequent—thirst for literary and scientific knowledge was *the* important factor in his education. Toronto University, where he graduated B.Sc., in 1887, was even at that time a distinguished seat of learning, ranking with the best in Anglo-Saxon countries. He often spoke of the debt which he owed to Doctor Wilson, President of the University, Doctor Golwin Smith, Professor of Political Economy, a man of rare literary and historical culture, and many other distinguished teachers of that time. Toronto University did for him exactly the best thing that any University ever did for any student—it opened the door of knowledge and it opened his eyes to the value of what he saw through the opened door.

In the halls of his Alma Mater he was introduced to that noble company of scientists and writers who were his good companions till his journey's end. Darwin taught him much, more perhaps than all the great truth-seekers of the past. Bell lived the dictum of Pasteur, who said, "Worship great men." He worshipped the master of modern evolutionary thought with the sincerest form of devotion in that he unconsciously assumed a deliberate, a detached attitude, a passion for careful analysis, which was so characteristic of the Sage of Down. I turn with delight again and again to a thumbnail sketch of Darwin's life, as I see faintly reflected in that mirror the face and character of Gordon Bell.

Charles Darwin was a man whose crowning achievement is perhaps the greatest single piece of work that any individual ever accomplished. After his return from his voyage with Captain Fitzroy in "The Beagle" he retired to a quiet village in Kent, where he spent the remainder of his life. At his home, called "The Downs," there was an ancient garden where he was accustomed to spend a large part of his time. His health was indifferent—he usually worked but two hours a day. It does one good to contemplate the picture of Darwin in his garden. The air is warm and caressing, pigeons are cooing softly, and over all a brooding stillness broken only by the drowsy hum of innumerable bees. One cannot think of Darwin as being driven—he just floated along. He was not poor, neither was he rich, he tried to do well at College

because his sisters expected it of him. When he undertook the historic voyage as naturalist on "The Beagle" it was because no one else wanted to go, and because if he had not gone his father would have made him a parson. However, he went, and out of what he saw and thought about in the succeeding five years has grown a theory that has changed the lives and thought of the intellectual world. He was a gentle and kindly man, and although he had a great purpose in the world, on account of his health he spent a large part of his time in rest and recreation. He was a model citizen of a country village, and met all his neighbors from the laborer to the clergyman on terms of absolute equality. Darwin's clergyman said when he settled in the village of Down—"Mr. Darwin knows botany better than anyone this side of Kew." When one reads an account of his voyage on "The Beagle" his voluminous and exact knowledge of Botany, Zoology and Geology, is evident at every turn—nothing escaped his eyes; no inference of his enquiring mind was other than exact and logical. For several years he was village magistrate but as such an official he was as unique as he was inefficient: all his cases were for poaching or for drunkenness. He had just two ways of disposing of the prisoner, one way—and the usual one—was to discharge the culprit with the remark "Why he's as good as we are, if tempted in the same way I would have done as he had done"—his other brand of justice was to fine the prisoner and pay the fine himself! There is no evidence of haste, no impatience, no mention of duty or responsibility in all his books—he ceased attending meetings of scientific societies fearing he should be drawn into the debates—he was attacked by every theologian from the Pope to the curate, not forgetting Mr. Gladstone, and he answered them not a word. Before he died in 1882 the whole world of intellectual men was at his feet.

What was once said of Darwin might with equal verity have been said of Gordon Bell. "I never knew anyone who met him, even for the briefest period, who was not charmed by his personality. Who could forget the hearty hand-grip at meeting, the gentle and lingering pressure of the palm at parting, and above all that winning smile which transformed his countenance so as to make portraits, or even photographs, seem ever afterwards unsatisfying! Looking back one is indeed tempted to forget the profoundness of this philosopher in recollection of the loveliness of the man."

Herein is to be found an explanation of Bell's universal popularity—he went about doing good, unconscious of his own merit. I am satisfied that he never deliberated as to the consequences to himself but always thought of all that might happen to the other fellow. That he was kind, thoughtful, talented, worthy, the best loved citizen of Manitoba, never entered his thought. Any

suggestion of his personal merit coming from an admirer he denied promptly and vehemently.

There has been some disposition on the part of the laboratory scientist to regard with suspicion, or at least with mild approval, the literary output of nature poets or naturalists, but this latter class of hybrid scientists has surely served a useful purpose in our modern world. Darwin's prestige rests quite as much upon skill in presenting in an understandable form the facts of the natural world as it does upon the correctness of the deductions he made from what he observed.

Professor Wallace and Charles Darwin hit upon the central idea of the evolutionary theory simultaneously and presented to the scientific world the results of their conjoint labor in a single paper, and yet, owing to Darwin's unequalled gift of being able to tell his story to the world in the language of the man on the street, his name and fame now encircles the Seven Seas, and such is the glamor which attached to him as the High-priest of Evolution that the work and even the name of Wallace is forgotten by the multitude.

This group of literary men has done a service of priceless value in making scientific truth the common property of the man on the street. The facts of Geology, of Botany, of Zoology, if stated as facts and in technical language, fail to catch the public eye. The tree of knowledge must be a living tree with glistening leaves and ripening fruit to excite the appetite of the average way-faring man; so Thoreau, Burroughs, Hudson, John Still, Osborn, Roosevelt, and scores of others, have taken the high-voltage current of scientific thought and stepped it down into such a form that it is both attractive, safe and useful to us all. Thoreau, though alive for several years after the publication of "The Origin of Species" may never have read that epoch-making book, certainly none of Thoreau's writing betray a knowledge of Darwin's work, but it is equally certain that the New England pencil maker was as capable of logical analysis and as observant of the facts of the world of nature as was the greatest of Englishmen. Thoreau, however, was essentially a philosopher, he loved to ruminate, he never went systematically at work as Darwin always did, to gather *all* the evidence, he did not try to solve any problem, he merely told what he saw.

Thoreau wrote in his diary one day: "Everyone who deserves to be regarded as higher than the brute may be supposed to have an earnest purpose to accomplish, which is the object of his existence," or, to state the proposition in the interrogative mood, "what are we living for?" It is more than probable that most of us are just living with the earnest purpose of being comfortably housed and fed, and maintaining at least an academic interest in what is said to be our duties to our neighbors. It is also probable

that the profession of Medicine gives its disciples about the best chance in the world to develop an earnest and worthwhile purpose. This opening confronts every neophyte as he enters medical practice. To Gordon Bell such an opportunity to continue his search for scientific truth, and at the same time to relieve suffering humanity was eagerly and joyously accepted. As he went on with his life's work, when it became impossible to satisfy both the demands of science and his obligations to the sick, he invariably sacrificed his time and his talents in doing the humane, though perhaps the unprofitable act.

The contemplation of a life of such self-sacrifice, of a life devoted to a single purpose, and that purpose being to heal the sick, brings home to each one of us in a peculiar personal way Thoreau's question—"what are we living for?"

A short-story writer of international repute puts these words in the mouth of one O'Halloran, a brawny Irishman who is wielding a pick and shovel, "I does me work, and I smokes me pipe and sleeps—what more is there in life anyhow?" This looks like a plain statement from a plain pick and shovel man who has no ideals, or if he ever had any he has lived them down, but there is a saving clause in the first sentence, "I does me work." O'Halloran does his work, perhaps a mile or so of railroad track was the better of it; perhaps the roadbed was more solid and sure because O'Halloran did his work and because O'Halloran did his work we are all a tiny morsel the better of it, and O'Halloran himself has earned his smoke and his sleep, and so in the contemplation of the life of the humble O'Halloran—who spoke of himself as "a lettuce-eater in this land where it is always afternoon," and also in the life of Gordon Bell—easily the foremost physician, and undoubtedly one of the greatest scientists of Western Canada, we find a common aim "to do my work." O'Halloran's work was jiggling railroad ties with a square-faced shovel, Bell's was saving or lengthening the lives and relieving the suffering of all humanity who came to him; your work and mine is likely somewhere between these antipodes—but whatever it is, and wherever—let it be done!

A good story-teller need not visit strange countries or meet odd characters to acquire proper material for his tales. He gathers his aggregate from the quarry on his own farm, he builds a plot and adorns the structure with homely truths and well-worn and familiar phantasies so that when the story is told a listener says: "Yes that must be true, it happened but yesterday, I know that very man myself, I will always remember this the best story in the world." There is in the life of any man or woman, if one digs deep, enough of sanity or madness, or joy or sorrow, of comedy or tragedy, to make a saga universal in its application. As a setting for the story one must remember only Shakespeare's lines—"All

places that the eye of heaven visits are to the wise man ports and happy havens."

So Gordon's tales were of the happenings of yesterday; of the innocent blunders of those who were known to be a bit awkward, of the unconscious heroism so frequently displayed by the pioneers of northern Canada, of the superstitions and wierd beliefs of Indians and fur-traders beyond the Ottawa. For example, he named our shooting lodge at Delta "The Wendigo Club"—The Devil's Club! Whether he intended to hint to marauding Indians that the place was taboo, or whether he wanted to indicate that the members of the Club were qualified for an intimate association with Satan, I do not know, but the name and its implications still stands.

His student life in this city was characterized by the same success in scholarship and in social popularity that had attended him since he entered Mrs. McDougall's school in Pembroke. It was but natural that he speedily formed a lifelong friendship with the late Dr. Frank Westbrook, who at the hour of his untimely death was President of the University of British Columbia. Doctor Westbrook was a favorite of fortune from the beginning. He had wealth and social position, he was an athlete of the first rank, but better than all else he had the spirit of a gentleman and never profitted personally in the least by the superior opportunities he enjoyed. He graduated in medicine here in the same year as Gordon Bell, took postgraduate work for a year in Cambridge, was appointed Professor of Bacteriology in the University of Minnesota, rapidly was made Dean of the Medical School there, and eventually was called to fill the President's Chair in the University of British Columbia. These two students soon became as were Damon and Pythias. They were a winsome pair, young and tall and slim as reeds; noble manly youths full of melodies and invention. They were keen in work and in play, and loved by all who new them.

After graduating in Medicine in 1890, Bell was appointed Superintendent of the Brandon Mental Hospital, which position he relinquished to become a partner of Doctor Good. Before beginning work with Doctor Good he prepared himself by doing postgraduate work in Vienna. His sojourn at the Austrian Capital made a deep and lasting impression on a mind which was as keenly sensitive as a photographic plate. He came back with a knowledge of scientific medicine and a skill in the practise of Ophthalmology which made him pre-eminent in his profession.

When Doctor Bell returned to Winnipeg, after resigning the superintendency of the Brandon Mental Hospital, he became a partner of the late Doctor Good, who was the first specialist in Ophthalmology in this city. This partnership lasted for business purposes for years, but it really was never dissolved while they

were both alive. Doctor Good was endowed beyond most men with a powerful and penetrating intellect, a profound knowledge of his speciality and of general medicine, and in addition to this he had the keenest possible interest in the welfare of the graduates of the local Medical School, and he was especially attracted by young men of the stamp of Gordon Bell, with whom he had so much in common.

Doctor Good, beside the possession of very unusual intellectual gifts, was endowed with a unique appreciation of the value of wit and humor in promoting the happiness of his fellows. He had a deep-rooted, honest conviction that while it might be more comfortable to live in a world with all the modern improvements, one might have been just as happy had he lived two thousand years ago, housed in a tub next door to Diogenes, with the privileges of communing with the wise and witty citizens of Athens. He practised his specialty with a sincere appreciation of the obligations which the practice of medicine entails, he was a good citizen of this city and made a major contribution to all our health and welfare projects, but what he really lived for was those golden hours he spent with his most intimate friends. In his suite in the Somerset Block, at the Club, or at the dinner-table of a professional friend, he became for the occasion the very spirit of youth and jollity. Stories of his own adventures (mostly mishaps) as an uncouth youth in Western Ontario, stories of a sojourn in the Klondike, where his life was hectic indeed (between 1900 and 1904), stories to no end and to no purpose but spontaneous and vastly entertaining. He could recite many of Kipling's poems and was unorthodox enough to have as his favorite the verses of the deep sea chanty:

"Must we play forevermore
On this windless glassy floor
Take back your golden fiddles
And we'll beat to open sea."

His favorite prose author was, of course, Mark Twain, and I believe that Doctor Good, as he read for the hundredth time the adventures of Tom Sawyer, was living over again the summer days of his boyhood in Bruce County, Ontario. He really worshipped at the shrine of Immortal Youth, and in the atmosphere of that temple he tried—not unsuccessfully—to spend his days! Rest and honor to his ashes!

It is self-evident that Gordon Bell, through his association with Doctor Good, learned many things beside what pertains to the science and art of medical practice; he saw in Doctor Good a man of mature judgment and of maturer years who yet managed to keep in step with youth. Both of them henceforth while they lived were in step with the music of springtime which they heard even though it was measured and far away!

Many of Gordon's intimate friends were surprised when the firm of Good and Bell dissolved and the latter became Provincial Bacteriologist. A partnership with a man of Doctor Good's ability and reputation was surely a Gift of the Gods to a beginner such as Bell was at that time. The explanation, however, is not hard to find and equally logical. Gordon Bell was practically the only man in Manitoba who knew Bacteriology; he was teaching that subject in the Medical School, the Provincial Board of Health needed a Bacteriologist. Bell was the only one who could do the work, he was approached, and with a willingness to help which was constitutional with him, he took on the job. Within a year he was not only Bacteriologist, but Epidemiologist and general factotum of the Provincial Board of Health. Gradually he spent less and less of his time with Doctor Good, but as long as the senior partner remained in Winnipeg there was a bond of intimacy between them that grew stronger with each succeeding year. Doubtless Gordon Bell made a great financial blunder when he gave up his partnership; it is just as certain though that the cash consideration never entered his thoughts.

Had Gordon continued the practice of his specialty with Doctor Good he doubtless would have shared in the ample fortune which fell to his older partner during the ensuing twenty years. But, had he done so, he would have missed many crowded years of opportunities for public service. That, after all, was the magnet that drew him away from a life of well-paid and limited usefulness to the backbreaking labor and always underpaid tasks in the performance of which he spent the whole of the remainder of his life.

During the score of years he was coroner's pathologist, he did post-mortems on many hundreds of individuals who had died suddenly or by violence. In spite of his growing familiarity with the gruesome details of the most sordid and awful crimes he never became callous or cold-blooded in the performance of his most unpleasant tasks. He maintained at all times a serious, a reverential attitude towards his subject, and when subsequently he appeared to give evidence in the Coroner's Court, his statements were so evidently based on his complete mastery of the facts that they were rarely if ever questioned.

Of Gordon Bell's work as a teacher in the Medical School it is scarcely necessary to speak. He was a real teacher, being equipped with an exhaustive knowledge of his subject and with an unusual capacity for imparting this knowledge to his students. He did not teach successfully because of his joy in teaching, in watching his pupils grow in mental stature, because of his intensive cultivation. No! He taught each individual youth thinking of that boy always, and of himself, the teacher, never; a great teacher,

whatever else he is, must be in sympathy and unselfish to an even greater degree.

Far beyond the ambit of his work in the class-room does the influence of his teaching extend; the nobility of his character and of the work he did, is to all his fellow citizens, and let us be assured will be to posterity, a very pillar of light and inspiration! He was a teacher of science, and of scientific medicine, because in his youth and—in his early youth at that—he sat at the feet of Aristotle. Aristotle, besides being a distinguished philosopher, the tutor of a greater warrior than Napoleon, a naturalist at the very head and front of that list of supermen. Aristotle was a prophet and certainly a major prophet at that, for he said once, "Science is vital, all other forms of learning are incidental."

Bell had intellectual qualities of the most extraordinary kind. His technical skill was quite phenomenal, and in addition he had a very unusual capacity for prolonged and exhausting effort. In short, he was admirably equipped by nature for scientific work. Assuredly he was potentially a scientist of the first rank whose name might have been enrolled with the names of the most illustrious biologists of our times; but, beside Bell the scientist, his slender body housed the mind and heart of Bell the brother of mankind, friend of all the world. He never hesitated, but with self-sacrifice quite unparalleled among his contemporaries he chose to do good rather than to achieve distinction of a far less worthy kind.

One of Gordon Bell's heroes of fiction was the old cattleman of "Wolfeville Days." That philosophic ancient said in a meditative moment, "Life does not consist so much in holdin' a good hand as in playin' a poor hand well!" I believe that homely epigram the doctor had framed and hung just across his field of vision. He certainly played his hand well. Sometimes it was a rather poor hand, too, short of trumps and aces and cluttered up with a lot of small stuff. For ten years he was the Chairman and Chief Executive of the Provincial Board of Health. He carried on a voluminous departmental correspondence, writing every letter himself—he hadn't even a fountain pen, let alone a typewriter. I can see him now, as I saw him hundreds of times, his desk littered with a dozen letters on trivial matters that could have been answered by a typist in one quarter of the time, yet he was chained to his job, he was "playin' a poor hand well." But the pity of it! Had he held aces and trumps he would have played just the same sort of a game. It was an amazing thing what he did accomplish, handicapped as he was; as has been noted, he was the Chairman of the Board of Health; the Public Health programme of this Province and its administration was entirely in his hands; he was Provincial Bacteriologist and Professor of Bacteriology; for a considerable time he was acting Dean of the Medical Faculty.

When these, his official activities were discharged, he spent the balance of a crowded day in the capacity of a general consultant in medicine, surgery and ophthalmology! He was a light sleeper, going to bed late and rising early, and to each overcrowded day he added many hours of the night, spent in reading; he fed on literature with the taste of an epicure and the digestion of a lumber-jack. It was my deliberate intention for a very long time to stick him with a quotation, an incident, or some bit of scientific or professional news which had been picked up in browsing at large in contemporary literature. I am driven to confess that my failures made a hundred percent score! He always had the answer up his sleeve. If it happened to be a medical problem that was under discussion, for the answer he often referred to a ponderous German volume—an encyclopedia of medicine—which seemed to have an inexhaustible store of information between its covers. He frequently read aloud a sentence from this notable volume to settle a debatable point, and as he himself was the only one present who understood German, I usually interpreted the twinkle in his eye to indicate a *free* translation. His laboratory of a Sunday morning was a kind of clearing-house for the sorting out, classification and settling of all puzzles and problems which the past week had brought forth. Nor did the debators confine their verbal efforts to the demonstration of medical theories; newspaper gossip, world politics, exploration, mining, and above and before all else, Natural History, afforded ample opportunity for such an exhibition of wit and wisdom as can never be repeated. These meetings were not prearranged or deliberate, they began at any hour and finished when everyone present woke up to the fact that he should have been away more than an hour ago! Without effort one can recall the stage, the setting and the central figure in those delightful Sunday morning performances. He rarely sat down but moved from his microscope to the incubator, from that to the section-cutter, to the telephone, to his desk, he usually smoked, and *always* listened; no flaw in the logic of an argument, no misstatement of fact or distortion of truth escaped him, and with his enchanting smile and the easy grace of a trained fencer, he disposed of the fallacious argument and turned the current of thought into its proper channel.

His knowledge of Natural History was quite as comprehensive as his knowledge of scientific medicine. From the microscope where he explored the wonders of life among the infinitely small, he turned with equal zest to contemplation of the starry heavens and the immensities of sidereal space. In every branch of biological research he was sincerely interested, and his intimate knowledge of both plants and animals peculiar to our northern latitudes was unsurpassed.

Perhaps no one in this audience or in the city owes as much to Gordon Bell as I admit owing: in a thousand ways, and on ten

thousand occasions he was a wise councillor and faithful friend. For one thing above all else I am deeply grateful that he directed my thoughts toward the wonders of the out-of-doors world.

To us city dwellers of an Anglo-Saxon community, the ability to read and understand a book written in our own language cannot be considered as much of an accomplishment. In truth, the three R's of a common school education gives reading the premier position in the group, and rightly so, for reading is the tool with which the nimble mind unlocks the stored up wisdom of all the past. But to read means more than to pour over the pages of what we are pleased to call a book, to read the printed page is but the first uncertain step of a child and to do all ones reading in a library or a reading-room is to close one's eyes to the real book of knowledge which lies open and inviting just beyond the doorstep.

Truly a wonderful book, the most wonderful that was ever written! No book is worth reading unless it tells you something interesting, something worth while knowing, or unless it tells you common things in an arresting, picturesque, and vivid way. Now the book of earth has between its covers a story more captivating, more thrilling, more thought-compelling, better worth while, than a combination of all the man-made stories in the world. Further, the book of earth tells its story with incomparable power and felicity of expression, its illustrations are a continuous panorama of scenes which no artist is gifted enough to even feebly imitate. This book is not hidden away in musty libraries, nor must it be bought or borrowed. It is always open, and while the open page is part of a continued story, each sentence is complete in its meaning and of surpassing interest! The best thing of all about this book is the fact that it is written in an universal language, it may, and has been read with equal pleasure and profit by men of all races and in all ages of earth's history. When you next cross your doorstep and feel the earth beneath your feet you have the privilege right then and there of becoming a charter member of this book-lover's library. Your membership will never cost you a cent, you will be supplied with the latest—and the earliest—news of the world every hour of your life which you spend in the open. You may begin the story anywhere. You cannot begin at the beginning because while human history goes back for 10,000 generations, life on this planet has evidently endured for millions of years, and earth itself came into existence so long ago that the human mind has devised no measuring rod capable of fathoming that abyss of time. Neither can you steal a look at the last chapter because the author just writes it day by day, and you get it warm from the press.

It matters but little what particular line of research interests or inspires the scientific mind; what the teacher, the research work-

er, or any thinking man is looking for is more light on the plan and process of evolution. Since this cosmic drama has found its place in the foreground of human speculation, who can escape the challenge?

The process of Evolution is on a parity, as a great natural law, with the force of gravity, the indestructibility of matter, the conservation of energy, and other such cosmic principles as underlie modern scientific thought. The human mind cannot grasp the evolutionary process, it is of such stupendous dimensions in its entirety, its purpose, its relations to time and space. The human eye or mind has not yet attained that elevation, has not yet achieved perspective comprehensive enough to take in the meaning of the evolutionary process. Darwin, who without doubt combined in his personality an unparalleled capacity for logical thought and an infinite patience in the pursuit of truth, saw more clearly than anyone ever has, the pattern of the web of Evolution as it unrolled before his penetrating vision. Certain oft repeated shades of color and figures of design betrayed a purpose, but gave him no hint of fulfilment, and he confessed his complete inability to offer any explanation of why or whither. The longer one allows his mind to dwell upon this majestic and orderly panorama of change, the firmer does the conviction grow that Darwin expressed an universal truth when he said:

"I feel most deeply that this whole question of Creation is too deep for human intellect. A dog might as well speculate on the mind of Newton! Let each man hope and believe what he care."

Even though Darwin, the greatest of all naturalists, has given his verdict thus, yet every truth-seeker in every laboratory, in every jungle, on every sea from pole to pole, is grasping eagerly each new fact and fitting it in place, hoping much, but achieving perhaps a little, perhaps, who knows but that some day a man will know whither the long trail leads? What superman, or God—if you will—is being moulded as a very pillar of Destiny to mark the end of that long trail!

Gordon Bell, with his penetrating vision and his capacity for logical analysis, was naturally a keen student of evolution. As he contemplated this majestic and orderly panorama of change, as he followed Darwin's trail of truth faithfully for over thirty years, he achieved a philosophic calm which might well have been the envy of all who grope in doubt, he acquired a cosmic religious experience that gave tone and color to his life and which he shared with a few of his most intimate friends. What a contemporary writer said of Einstein's religion applied with vivid exactitude to the religious experiences of Gordon Bell: "His idea of the universe is close to religiousness. He has the new reverential and confident relationship to the universe that is typical of science in these days."

Cosmic religion has been defined as an adventure in friendship with the universe; one is invited to make friends with a universe, with a god of the machine whose scheme of things interpreted through this living world has small place for pity. In the ruthless process of nature the researches of science have found scant evidence of sympathy with the human sorrow or suffering. Yet, having accepted the inexorable decree which binds humanity and all living things to a common fate, one turns with infinite relief to the consolation which nature gives to us with such unstinted generosity.

The nature lover worships a deity whose beneficence is manifest in a continual feast of wonderful and beautiful things which God has provided for contemplation and profit; for him no season is dull. Spring entrances by holding before the man of three score and ten a mirror in which he sees the shadow of his own youth. Summer and autumn spread before him a glorious manifestation of Spring's promises fulfilled, while winter brings rest and quiet sleep. Surely a sequence of events that leaves no want or wish unsatisfied!

An individual whose daily round of duties require much serious thought and concentrated effort, often finds rest and relaxation in concocting nonsense rhymes, in the production of atrocious limericks, or in active participation in jests—practical or verbal. Lewis Carrol, for example, a profound mathematician, was at the same time the author of "Alice in Wonderland." Our own Professor Buller has been known to lose interest in the edible fungi long enough to be delivered of the best and most widely-known limerick in the British Empire. Stephen Leacock, a Professor of Political Economy, has contributed more to his personal fame, and far more to the good of his countrymen by his humorous adventures with the idle rich than he ever did by his solid heartbreaking efforts to make his science of real value to his classes. "A little nonsense now and then is relished by the wisest men." The sixth sense, and more useful than any of the other five, is the sense of humor. Humor is the very spice of good living. The greatest benefactor of mankind is the teacher who teaches us not to remember but forget our troubles, who teaches us to laugh in the face of Old Man Trouble when we meet him.

The play instinct is of primitive origin, man sharing it with many of the lower forms of animal life. Youth is the playtime of the human span, and to carry on into adolescence and middle age an appetite for healthy recreation and honest fun is beyond doubt an evidence of an unusual degree of sanity and the rarest of good fortune: During his whole life Gordon Bell was fond of play. His winter evenings were often spent with a few congenial friends building boats, water-wheels and windmills, and the following glorious summer days were joyously squandered in trying to

make these contraptions work! The Argentine windmill never did go round—it was not built that way. It was an utter failure in a mechanical sense, but as a source of innocent merriment it was our most profitable investment. Thoreau said that “youth gets together the materials for a bridge to the moon, and middle age builds a woonshed of them.” Gordon Bell never scrapped a bridge to build a woodshed, instead he built in each succeeding year bridges over wider chasms, and airy castles more entrancing.

As an after dinner speaker he was unequalled by any of his medical brethren. One need not limit the application of that statement to a profession which includes many gifted orators—he was inimitable. His outstanding effort was made upon the occasion of the annual dinner of the Medical School, a good many years ago, at least in pre-prohibition days. He was replying to the toast of the Faculty in his usual kindly and humorous way, when he came to describe the Professor of Obstetrics he said: “This gentle soul has the physique of a prize-fighter with the disposition of Little Lord Fontelroy.” The description was so apt and it was delivered with such charming intimacy and sincerity that everyone present stood up and cheered both Doctor Gray and the speaker.

His best stories were of incidents which occurred in his experiences in the lumber woods or on the lakes and rivers of the Ottawa country. Jean Baptiste the shantyman, Joe Bedard the teamster, Ambroise the cook, Coullisse Gigeau the river driver—those red-blooded heroes, the lineal descendents of the *Couriers du bois*—were made to live again by the magic of his tongue, they were paraded before our eyes with the vividness of the silver-screen, one could feel and hear the earth-shaking crash of centenarian pines, the roar of rapids, tumultuous shouts of men, their songs at evening when the camp fires were gleaming. These were the scenes he loved to unroll, and of which his listeners never tired. There have been only a few great story-tellers, and the best of these told their tales with a painter's brush. Consider the *Retreat from Moscow*, *The Angelus*, *The Doctor*, what a wealth of narrative is expressed in pigment, in light and shade! The closer a narrative comes to the photograph of an actual scene the more vivid is the story told. The real artist in words then is one who, with a painter's skill, depicts with a single stroke, a single paragraph, a scene or an event which cannot be forgotten. When Gordon Bell told about some new place he had visited, or some wierd or unusual object he saw, speaking for myself, my bump of curiosity remained an open sore until I had followed his trail, and had seen with my own eyes what he had described. Some thirty years ago he made a trip to Lake Manitoba, north of Portage la Prairie. On his return he sold the idea of a Hunting Lodge to half a dozen of

his friends, and in a fortnight Wendigo Lodge was built and is still occupied by some of the original investors.

Fifteen years later he discovered Fox Lake, near Minaki—within a week he had twenty others apparently more enthusiastic than he was himself about sylvan scenery and the gentle art of fishing. The result was Namaycush Club, and fifteen other cottages around the lake, one might say, overnight. He told me once of a wild blackberry that was said to be a native of the country East of Ft. Francis. After two years of correspondence with postmasters, station agents and foresters, at almost every point on the C.N. from Rainy River to Fort William, I finally located the bramble and grew it in my garden. It turned out to be a dud, mostly leaves and thorns, and remarkably shy on fruit, but looking for it gave me no end of thrills, and what a gorgeous picture he made of those blackberries as they ran riot in the woods east of Ft. Francis! I had no reason to be, and never was disappointed in the slightest degree because the blackberries were no good! Just one more incident: in coming up from Fox Lake one day about a year before he left us, he saw near Vivian Station a small limestone boulder which had, instead of the brown streaks characteristic of Tyndall stone, purple markings. He told me of it next day and we planned to go in search of the mother ledge, as he was sure it would be the finest building stone in the west. We even started once by motor to look for that quarry, but the road was impassible. I hope to find it yet and I never pass Vivian without seeing a limestone boulder with purple streaks lying on the right-of-way!

His enthusiasm, one might say, was highly contagious, and can be well illustrated by a story told of Pericles and a mule. Pericles was the central sun of a galaxy of stars composed of the greatest men of classical Greece. He outshone them all, even Socrates, Hippocrates, Phidias and Euripides, in wit, wisdom, and accomplishment. He had the knack of finding ability in others, and a still greater faculty of enlisting that ability in voluntary service to the state. He infused a whole city full of indolent people with his own animation and he set them at work building a temple that endures to this day as the finest example of the builders' art. The historian relates, "for several years everybody worked carrying stone, hewing, tugging, lifting, carving. Up the steep road that led to the acropolis was a constant procession carrying materials. The spirit of Pericles, his zeal for accomplishment seemed to pervade the very atmosphere of Athens. Up and down they went, an endless procession of burden bearers, including mules and oxen. One aged hybrid, inspired neither by pride of ancestry nor hope of posterity, finally became lame and windbroken and was turned out to die. But the mule, like a cat, has nine lives, and in a few days pushed his way back into the procession and went up and down with the crowd, filled and comforted by the thought

that he was doing his job, and doing it well for Pericles!" To inspire a mule with a passion for work and loyalty to a worthy cause is no mean thing! Verily I believe Gordon Bell could have done it!

He was extremely fond of practical jokes of a harmless kind. For instance, there had been a great deal of discussion at the Fishing Club as to whether or not winter fishing for trout was feasible. A new member was so enthusiastic over the prospect that he chopped a hole through ice three feet thick, put down a baited hook, and went back to the cabin to await results. In the meantime, shortly after the line was set, Gordon pulled it up and replaced the bait with a salt mackerel. When the fisherman, after a reasonable delay, went to retrieve his catch he was delighted to find that he had caught a fish, but surprised indeed that it was a salt water fish, and in addition was both dried and smoked. However, the victim of the joke was a Scot, and running true to form, he kept it all to himself and honors were even! His humor was of the perennially bubbling sort, just ready to boil over with the slightest rise in temperature. Nothing in his character contributed more to his popularity than his perennial cheerfulness. His office was visited daily by dozens and scores of his fellow-physicians who were drawn thither, not altogether for his wise council, but that they might gather comfort and cheer from his radiant presence.

One of his most delightful personal qualities was demonstrated in the way he dealt with book agents. It appears that these enterprising salesmen have a confidential list of names of good and bad prospects in all the cities and towns they visit, and I'm sure that in Winnipeg's good prospect list the name of Gordon Bell led all the rest. I am equally sure that about 25 or 30 years ago my own name could be found perhaps second on the list; but as the years passed I became indifferent, even calloused, against the onslaught of these high-g geared vendors of literature, so that latterly I assumed an attitude of hostility and ignorance as soon as a caller began to extract from his various pockets samples of bindings and specimen pages. If the unfortunate agent appeared crestfallen and humiliated by such an exhibition of lack of culture and crude ignorance as to literary values, as a sop I handed out Gordon Bell's address, with the assurance that he was the most highly gifted bookworm, and the best judge of bindings west of the Great Lakes. After that I studiously avoided Bell's laboratory for a few days, hoping that the incident might have been forgotten; it rarely was, and when I made by next appearance in his office, this is a sample of our discussion of the occurrence:

(G.B.)—(No preliminaries as to weather or health).—"Did you send that blank book agent up to see me Wednesday last?"

(E.W.M.)—"Let's see, Wednesday last? Why no, on Wednesday and Thursday I was in Kenora."

(G.B.)—"Don't strain yourself, or the truth, in concocting an alibi, here's a card you gave him with my name on it in your own writing."

(E.W.M.)—"Did you buy anything?"

(G.B.)—"Buy anything? That bird could sell me a complete file of Waghorns' Guide with calf bindings and gilt edges. If you send any more of these fellows up to my office I'll go down to East Kildonan and poison your well!"

(E.W.M.)—"Don't let the cost of the books worry you. Think of the cultural value of such a library as you are accumulating."

(G.B.)—"Culture my eye! If I buy any more books, I will be paying monthly instalments for them as long as I live, and alimony at the same time, as my wife positively refuses to let another book inside our door!"

"Those were the days of real sport."

Not only was he an easy mark for itinerant bookmen, any designing individual who wanted money could get it from him almost without effort. For example, one day I visited his office and found him with a set of carpenters' tools that a student had sold him that morning. The vendor had worked as a carpenter during the summer, and having no further use for the outfit unloaded it on one who certainly would never use it, but who was the most generous and sympathetic friend a student ever had!

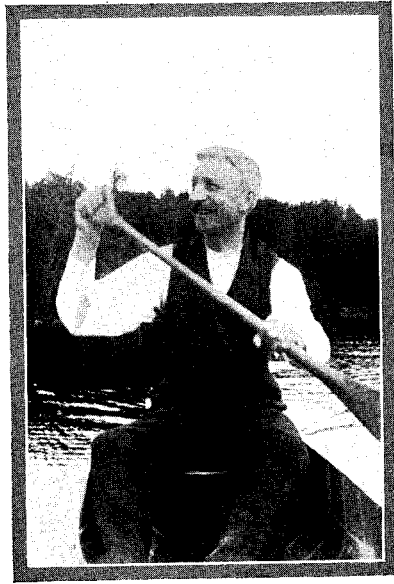
When a medical man in these western provinces died or disappeared leaving a family in straightened circumstances, the books and instruments of the departed usually were to be found shortly afterwards in Doctor Bell's office; he tried to sell second-hand medical text books and obsolete surgical appliances to his medical brethren, 95% of whom were loaded to the guards with exactly the same material. It was a hopeless and thankless task, and usually resulted in Gordon paying for these worthless articles himself and paying a price which was a fair value when the goods were bought.

Owing to the disastrous character of an attack of typhoid which he had in the year 1889, he was unable to take a prominent part in outdoor sport. However, for many years he was an active member of a shooting club, and spent many happy days each autumn in the duck marshes at Wendigo Lodge. He was an excellent shot, and won the provincial championship on the occasion of the annual contest in the year 1901. He was particularly skilful in the art of handling a canoe, he paddled that temperamental craft with such ease and grace that the performance always suggest a champion broncho-buster doing his stunts at the Calgary Stampede.

Gordon Bell, in 1912, forsook Wendigo Lodge and transferred his interest and his allegiance to the Namaycush Fishing

Club. He did this because, with the passing of years, there comes to men of mature age not a lessened interest in clean and healthful recreation, but a desire to turn from strenuous days of shooting over prairie and marsh to the far gentler art of angling. "I love all anglers, they be such honest civil men," said Issaac Walton. Gordon found in the cult of fishermen, many such honest civil men, and he made of them good companions and better men than they were before.

Certainly it was not the trout he caught that took him away from his laboratory and his books, albeit the fish themselves were attractive enough! Thoreau said of the pickerel of Waldeau pond what might well be said of the trout of our northern lakes, "I am always impressed by their rare beauty as if they were fabulous



fishes. They possess a quite dazzling and transcendent beauty which separates them from commoner and coarser fish. They are not green like the pines nor grey like the stones, nor blue like the skies: but they have to my eyes—if possible—yet rarer colors like flowers and precious stones." Fabulous indeed were the fishes of Fox Lake, for they shone as if they were pearls, and their daintiness of flesh is unsurpassed. The water of the lake is so transparent that the bottom can be distinctly seen at a depth of 12 or even 20 feet. There are many sandy beaches on its shore line of almost

eleven miles. Round about stand granite cliffs, in many places rising abruptly from the water's edge, while above and beyond these cliffs are the imposing rounded ridges of granite and gneiss, the weather-worn and ice eroded skeleton of the old Laurentian range. Near the shoreline, especially in shallow water, the bottom is seen to be of bright yellow sand, with here and there rounded boulders resting and giving shelter and safety to schools of timid minnows and caddis flies.

The shore is irregular enough not to be monotonous, and from the centre of the lake one may get the best possible view of the encircling forest. Not only do you see the pines and birches marching up in companies or in skirmish lines to the very tops of the distant hills, but in the water between your boat and the shore you see an inverted forest more beautiful than the real, because nearer at hand. Thus, whether you look upward to the sky or downward to the depths, you are looking into a vast amphitheatre peopled with green and living trees.

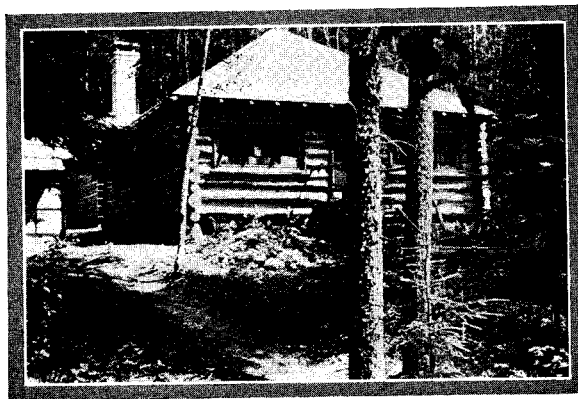
The Laurentian woods in early spring have a wistful charm, a pathetic appeal, that enhances their rare beauty a thousandfold. The soil is so thin and meagre, the winds are so bleak, spring comes with such hesitating steps, yet where a granite crag or a fringe of dense evergreens shuts out the wintry north wind there springs up the trailing arbutus, the trillium or the fragrant twin flower, in mad abundance. If you dig in the peaty black leaf mould you will find not gold but gold-thread, a mass of tangled bright shining roots of the *Coptis trifoliata*, the color of Australian gold. A thousand rivulets course down the rocky hillsides and when these clamorous streamlets reach the lower and more level ground instead of the shouts and splash of waterfalls, one hears—

“A noise like of a hidden brook
In the leafy month of June
That to the sleeping woods all night
Singeth a quiet tune.”

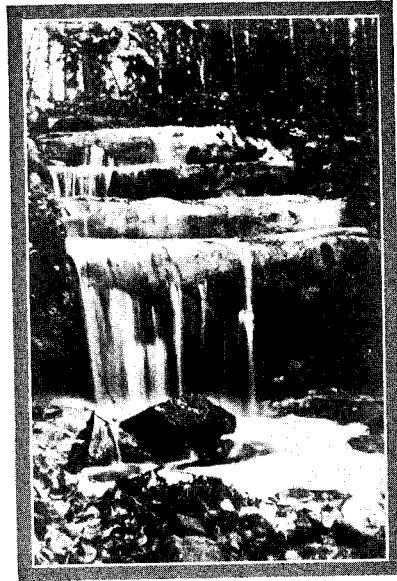
A Laurentian forest has a quality of stability which it shares with the obdurate granite on which it grows: in winter or in summer it is green—not the tender green of maple or birch leaves in early spring—but a durable rather sombre green that lasts throughout the year. Of these evergreen trees the pine is chief. The white pine is the aristocrat of our eastern conifers. In fact, it might well be spoken of as the Monarch of the Northern Woods. It has a quality of sturdiness which, combined with its grace and symmetry, lends it a peculiar charm to the lover of trees. When other trees are bending to a stiff gale, when the trembling poplar sways in its perennial fright, when spruce and balsam lean against each other creaking loud protests at the fury of the wind, there



The Water-wheel, Fox Lake



His Cabin, Fox Lake



The Waterfall, Fox Lake



Memorial Tablet, Fox Lake

stands the white pine, only its topmost twigs are nodding gracefully as to a passing breeze.

In a primeval forest of giant trees there is an atmosphere of solemnity, it engenders a feeling of awe and wonder, one feels that rude sounds or boisterous play would desecrate the sanctity of this sacred place. We wander with reverent steps down the dim aisles of that forest cathedral, while from the luminous tops of the lofty pines, tall as the masts of stately ships, there falls a music faint and clear "like horns of elfland faintly blowing." Even the flying feet of impetuous youth slow down to the rhythm of that tune!

He took to fishing "as an employment for his idle time, which was then not idly spent, for angling was after tedious study a rest to his mind, a cheerer of his spirits, a calmer of unquiet thoughts, a moderator of passions. Angling ever begets in those that practise and profess the art habits of peace and patience." Thus did Isaac almost 300 years ago extol the virtues of fishing and fishermen: today all honest and civil men accept this the creed of the Complete Angler, believing and knowing it to be everlastingly true.

When he first visited Fox Lake in 1912, I believe it was the love of good companionship and healthy sport that drew him there, but soon the charm of the lake and the spell of the surrounding forest-clad hills led him to establish a summer home and plant a garden a short distance from Namaycush Lodge.

Last summer I followed the path he made from his cabin to his garden. Though eight seasons' wastage of leaves and crumbling soil have filled the path almost level with the forest floor, still it is plainly visible, and as I followed it through the woods it seemed as though a finer sense than sight was guiding me. I felt as though no lapse of time or boisterous flood, or winter storm, or grinding ice ever could quite efface the path he made! At the end of that path is his garden. A word about gardens. There is no device of man which expresses the author's meaning as a garden does; it is the outward and visible sign of its owner's thought. If the gardener is fond of show and sensitive to criticism, the garden will set forth his defense in flaming rows of bloom, costly and garish. If the gardener is untidy and only does the thing because it is the custom, the result is, that in the end, a sign must be put up, "this is a garden." The timid hesitating gardener is late in starting, has no plan and no success; when one visits him the visitor gets excuses instead of bouquets.

Dr. Bell's garden comprised about half an acre of ground which he cleared with his own hands out of the primeval forest, the soil light sand with an acid peaty flavor. Ordinary garden vegetables and annuals which do well on these prairies will not grow there; the wise gardener chose for his beds and rows the plants indigenous to an acid soil, blueberries in particular, some of

which he imported from the peat bogs of New Jersey. He put in a pipe from a nearby creek through which he brought water in abundance to the thirsty soil. His garden expressed the character of the man, vigorous, adaptable, original and successful.

I am not grieving that the wild plants native to the woods have again resumed possession of that garden plot. The surrounding pines lean over that little clearing watching their seedlings springing between the rows. In summer the sheltered air is drowsy with the hum of bees, and the murmur of a waterfall. The gardener is gone but the color and fragrance of that tiny garden plot will linger in our memories while life lasts.

Many of Bret Harte's poems were constantly in his mind and often on his tongue, and this was particularly true of "Dickens in Camp," beginning "above the pines the moon was slowly drifting. The river sang below." I can easily believe that never a moonlit scene of pines and shining water failed to bring to his mind the delicate imagery and haunting music of that gem of western verse.

Harte's story of "Tennessee's Partner" was perhaps his best loved short sketch in prose. The trial of Tennessee, his execution, the funeral procession down the dusty trail through the Redwoods, the Pardner's funeral sermon, an oration that for native dignity and lofty sentiment is unequalled, he could recite verbatim, and as he repeated the familiar lines: "When a man has been running free all day, what's the natural thing for him to do? Why, to go home, and if he ain't in a condition to go home, what can his best friend do? Why, bring him home. And here's Tennessee who has been running free and we are bringing him home from his wanderings." Whoever heard him was forever impressed alike with the genius of the author and the sincerity of his interpreter.

Doctor Good, with whom he was associated so intimately, and for so many years, was also a man of much literary taste, but Bell's ideas of value in prose or poetry were quite different from those of his older partner. Good was captured by the robust jingle, the virile march of Kipling's verse, while Bell turned with a keener ear and a far finer sense of enjoyment to the songs from Shakespeare's plays and the immortal poems of Burns.

His surviving brother, Mr. Wilson Bell, said in a recent letter to me: "Knowing him as you do you will understand that he was born with a love of poetry which I think persisted throughout his life. I have a recollection of him sitting on a rail fence declaiming from 'Midsummer Night's Dream' to a somewhat unappreciative audience of farm boys." A man's thoughts, like his feet, are prone to follow well worn paths. It was plainly evident to all who knew Gordon Bell intimately that, as his brother says, he was born with a love of poetry and that his affection never waned. Shakespeare had made such a plain path that he followed it with ease and

delight. He followed it in youth with flying feet to the light-hearted measure of Titania in "A Midsummer Night's Dream":

"First rehearse your song by rote
To each word a warbling note:
Hand in hand with fairy grace
Will we sing and bless this place."

In Spring his thoughts were perennially attuned to the lilting song of Amiens:

"Under the Greenwood tree
Who loves to lie with me
And turn his merry note
Unto the sweet bird's throat."

In the storm and stress of winter, when days were short and night drove man and beast to shelter, the robust Amiens again carried comfort to him:

"Blow, blow, thou winter wind,
Thou art not so unkind
As man's ingratitude:
Thy tooth is not so keen
Because thou art not seen
Although thy breath be rude.

Freeze, freeze, thou bitter sky,
That dost not bite so nigh
As benefits forgot:
Though thou the waters warp,
Thy sting is not so sharp
As friend remember'd not."

How many times did he speak of a poor mortal whom he had just seen close his eyes for the last time, as Mistress Quickly spoke of Falstaff's death:

"A' made a finer end and went away an it had been any christom child: a' parted even just between twelve and one, even at the turning o' the tide: for after I saw him fumble with the sheets, and play with flowers, and smile upon his finers' ends, I knew there was but one way; for his nose was as sharp as a pen, and a' babbled of green fields."

What I believe was the last verse I ever heard fall from his lips was a few lines which begun:

"All the court has gone a Maying,
Maids and gallant gaily straying."

I will never forget that incident. It was on a beautiful morning towards the end of May. The trees outside the windows of his

laboratory were crowned with the garlands of Spring, a robin was building a nest in an elm tree almost within an arm's length of the window. For days the wild geese had ploughed the azure depths of the air, the apex of the plough ever pointing to the pole star; I wanted him to drop his work and come with a party on a fishing trip. For reply he quoted:

“Bus me, bus me, bauble mine,
Be my love and I'll be thine,
All the Court has gone a-maying,
Maid and gallants gaily straying,
All the Court at love is playing,
Since such joys can ne'er be mine,
Be my love and I'll be thine.”

“I can't do it—look at the work piled up on my desk and I have to go to Brandon this afternoon.”

Of all human virtues courage is the stoutest staff on which a man may lean in life's rough journey. Courage is the atmosphere—the very breath of life—to men of thought and action.

Courage to the limit and of a remarkable degree was exemplified in the life of Gordon Bell.

About fourteen years ago on a shooting trip at the old Wendigo Lodge north of Portage he had a very narrow escape from death by exposure. The circumstances were these, he went out in the early morning in a light canoe, taking nothing with him but his gun and a hundred shells. The wind was blowing a gale from the Northwest, and, as the date was early in November, there was a thin skin of ice on all the sheltered bays. After following the open leads for a while he turned into an inlet intending to get into a hide among the tall reeds and wait for the morning flight. At the edge of the reeds the ice was strong enough and sharp enough to cut a big gash in the Peterboro. In a minute the canoe was resting on the mud with the Doctor standing in three feet of ice-water. He had, however, managed to keep his ammunition dry. His situation was perilous in the extreme; there was behind him three hundred yards of marsh with three feet of water and reeds six or eight feet high between him and the nearest dry land; in front was Clandeboy bay with miles of open water. No one on shore to leeward could hear his calls or signal shots on account of the unfavorable wind. There he stood all day long until, by the sheerest luck, after four p.m. another party of hunters, in a copper sheathed canoe, happened to pass to windward of him and hearing his signal shots made their way to him and rescued him when he had only half a dozen shells left. The late Dr. Howard McDiarmid and the writer were members of that party, and after we got him to the cabin and got him warm enough to talk coher-

ently he said, "I wished all day long as I stood in that ice-water that I had two wooden legs."

Once, when surveying north of the Ottawa, his party was driven south by an early winter, with a limited amount of food and a still scantier supply of clothes and bedding, they were chased by incessant north-westerly gales, flurries of snow blinded them, reeling forest bombarded them with icy branches and broken tops of trees. Finally after days of tumultuous hardship and shivering nights, the rivers and lakes became frozen solid, canoes were abandoned, and with the demons of frost and hunger hard after them they spent the last two days and sleepless nights on foot, following an Indian guide. They eventually came upon a lumber camp. The cook, with supplies for the winter, had already arrived, and their troubles were over. To hear Gordon Bell tell the story of that flight through the wintry and storm lashed forest with snow, frost and hunger hot on his trail, was as thrilling as Coleridge's immortal tale of the "Ancient Mariner."

Doctor Gordon Bell made but a few contributions of scientific or literary value to medicine. Among his contemporaries and medical associates this failure to achieve a permanent record in the annals of Medical Science, while it is indeed regrettable, is nonetheless a tribute to the character of the man. He had both the capacity and the urge for research, for scientific investigation of the most intricate and difficult kind, but he had, on the other hand, a provincial laboratory—and the only one in the province—in which he did everything that the 600 doctors of Manitoba asked him to do; he had his Medical College work, which involved all the teaching in bacteriology, a good deal of the pathology—at one time—and at intervals he was also Dean of the Faculty; he did almost all the coroner's post-mortems in the Province. In consequence the demands of the passing hour were so overwhelming and his sense of duty so keen—he was so honest with himself—that he did the menial tasks of the day and turned his face with regret away from work of a far more congenial kind, and which would have endowed him with lasting fame. On many occasions he spoke to me earnestly about the hope he had cherished for thirty years of doing some original work in pernicious anaemia. Owing to the prevalence of this disease in Manitoba the opportunities for research were unexcelled; he and Doctor Torrance—head of the Federal Department of Veterinary Science—had long before spent a summer investigating a somewhat analogous disease among horses, and when I was appointed Professor of Medicine he at once spoke to me of the chances we had of co-operation and success in discovering the cause of this mysterious and fatal disease. There rises in my memory without effort, but with infinite regret the plans we made to share in some worth-while job, to explore, to map out, perhaps to win by luck and work, some new and precious lode of

knowledge. Alas, when a start was to be made on the morrow, he was away investigating an outbreak of small-pox, or he had half-a-dozen coroner's cases on hand, or a medical friend was ill in Saskatchewan and had asked his counsel, so the day drifted by as a tale that is told till evening came! Gordon Bell did good by stealth, he took no thought for the morrow, nor for fame or fortune, and the worth of what he accomplished must be appraised by methods more precise than those which are current in a sordid and self complacent age. There was not a man or women with whom he came in contact who failed to acquire some things of that virtue and sincerity in which he dwelt.

References have been already made to Doctor Bell's work in his job as the executive of the Provincial Board of Health. He first became connected with that organization in the year 1897. From that date onward, without interruption, public health work in Manitoba was his chief concern, the routine duties of his office embraced every detail of public health administration in Manitoba, outside of the city of Winnipeg. For many years he was Chairman of the Board and at all times he was its guiding spirit. In spite of the routine drudgery in which he spent most of his laborious days he maintained a cheerful interest in everything he undertook, no matter how simple or how uninteresting it was. One might say he lived and breathed and worked in an atmosphere of boyish and buoyant activity. Every laboratory worker, every professional associate he had in public health work, from the very hour he or she entered the service, became his disciple. He led them every one, even the humblest, in the search of truth, he lifted them, even the most lowly, toward the exalted level of his own life, and when he left them for the Elysian Fields, each one of his followers said in his heart: "He was indeed a man."

Gordon Bell's contribution to the citizens of this community, and to the members of his own profession in particular, was the example he set. The example of a life devoted entirely to the service of his fellowmen, a life reflecting at every turn the greatness of his soul. How can we, enriched in health of body and mind by his labors, inspired by his example of patience and self-sacrifice, erect to his memory a more fitting tribute than by emulating his example, thus setting forth in our own lives a perpetual demonstration of the value of Pasteur's advice: "Worship great men!"

In the preparation of the story of his life and character I have drawn chiefly upon my personal knowledge of him as youth and man. I have tried to make these pages a mirror in which you may see him as I saw him almost daily for thirty years. If his shadow is indistinct, blurred in outline, or fogged by irrelevant detail, let it be remembered that the writer is an incurable amateur in the art of literary expression.

In conclusion I must express the thought that Gordon Bell, in spite of the onerous burdens he bore for others, and in spite of the handicaps he carried, was conscious of having lived a useful and helpful life. This was reflected in his cheerful countenance and in his perennial good humor, and is best expressed in Dryden's translation of Horace's Ode:

“Happy the man, and happy he alone,
He who can call today his own:
He who, secure within, can say,
Tomorrow do thy worst, for I have lived today!
Be fair or foul, or rain or shine:
The joys I have possessed, in spite of fate, are mine;
Not Heaven itself upon the past has power,
But what has been, has been, and I have had my hour.”



